

Amendments to the Claims:

This replacement listing of claims will replace the listing of claims submitted with the Amendment filed January 27, 2009:

Replacement Listing of Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A stopper comprising a cork substrate and a barrier layer, ~~which said barrier layer is formed by the application of a~~ being a composite layer comprising at least one reactive hot melt polyurethane adhesive to the substrate sub-layer and at least one sub-layer having lower oxygen permeability than the reactive hot melt adhesive, wherein at least one of said reactive hot melt polyurethane adhesive sub-layers being located against the cork substrate and wherein said barrier layer has a thickness of from about 0.05 to about 100 microns.
2. (Previously presented) A stopper according to Claim 1 wherein the barrier layer has a permeability to oxygen of less than about $200 \text{ cm}^3 \text{ m}^{-2} \text{ day}^{-1}$.
3. (Previously presented) A stopper according to Claim 1 wherein the barrier layer has a permeability to oxygen of less than about $50 \text{ cm}^3 \text{ m}^{-2} \text{ day}^{-1}$.
4. (Previously presented) A stopper according to Claim 1 wherein the barrier layer has a permeability to oxygen of less than about $30 \text{ cm}^3 \text{ m}^{-2} \text{ day}^{-1}$.
5. (Currently amended) A stopper according to Claim 1 wherein the barrier layer has a permeability to oxygen of less than about $0 \text{ cm}^3 \text{ m}^{-2} \text{ day}^{-1}$.
6. (Currently amended) A stopper according to Claim 1 wherein the barrier layer has a thickness of from about ~~0.05~~ 0.075 to about ~~100~~ 50 microns.

7. (Currently amended) A stopper according to Claim 1, wherein the barrier layer has a thickness of from about ~~0.075~~ 0.1 to about ~~50~~ 30 microns.
8. (Canceled)
9. (Canceled)
10. (previously presented) A stopper according to Claim 1, wherein the barrier layer includes one or more additives.
11. (Currently amended) A stopper according to Claim 10 wherein the one or ~~each~~ more additive is selected from metal oxides finely divided silicon, powdered PTFE and clays.
12. (previously presented) A stopper according to Claim 1, wherein the stopper is cylindrical in shape and has two faces located at the ends of the cylinder.
13. (canceled)
14. (Currently amended) A stopper according to Claim 12 wherein ~~the or~~ at least one face is rounded or bevelled.
15. (Previously presented) A stopper according to Claim 12 wherein the barrier layer is located at either or both of the faces.
16. (Currently amended) A stopper according to Claim 12, wherein the barrier layer is located within the body of the stopper and substantially parallel to ~~the or~~ at least one of the faces of the stopper.
17. (Previously presented) A stopper according to Claim 1, wherein the barrier layer extends across the entire face or cross-section of the stopper such that a continuous barrier is provided.

18. (Previously presented) A stopper according to Claim 1, wherein the barrier layer extends across only a portion of the face or cross-section.
19. (Previously presented) A stopper according to Claim 1, wherein the barrier layer extends beyond the face or cross-section of the stopper to form a gasket.
20. (Canceled)
21. (Canceled)
22. (Canceled)
23. (Currently amended) A stopper according to Claim [[20]] 1 wherein the lower oxygen permeability ~~material~~ sub-layer is an ethylene vinyl alcohol copolymer.
24. (previously presented) A stopper according to Claim 1, wherein the stopper is a stopper for a bottle.
25. (original) A stopper according to Claim 24 wherein the bottle is a wine bottle.
26. (Previously presented) A stopper according to Claim 24 wherein the stopper is made of cork or plastics material.
27. (Previously presented) A stopper according to Claim 1, wherein the barrier layer will additionally provide a barrier to microbiological contaminants.
28. (Canceled)
29. (Canceled)
30. (Canceled)
31. (Canceled)
32. (Canceled)

- 33. (Canceled)
- 34. (Canceled)
- 35. (Canceled)
- 36. (Canceled)
- 37. (Canceled)
- 38. (Canceled)
- 39. Canceled)
- 40. (Currently amended) A method of applying a barrier layer to a cork stopper comprising applying a sub-layer of a reactive hot melt polyurethane adhesive to one of a stopper and a partially formed barrier layer sub-layer having lower oxygen permeability than the reactive hot melt adhesive to the stopper,[[;]] and allowing the reactive hot melt polyurethane adhesive to cool,[[;]] and ~~contacting the stopper and the barrier layer such~~ that bonding occurs between the stopper and the barrier layer.
- 41. (original) A method according to Claim 40 wherein the barrier layer having been applied to the stopper is held in tension and the stopper is pushed into a cup.